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REMARKS

Claims 1-6 and 10-13 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Mokerji (U.S. Patent No. 6,168,242). Mokerji does not disclose an article including a faucet surface or a door knob surface having a layer of polymer and a layer of refractory metal compound or refractory metal alloy compound. Mokerji discloses an article 18 having a polymeric layer 20, a layer 21 of zirconium compound, titanium compound, or zirconium/titanium alloy compound, and a transparent top coat 22. It is disclosed that the article 18 can be part of a vehicle, such as a wheel cover. Mokerji does not disclose that the article 18 is a faucet surface or a door knob surface as required by Applicant's claims, and Claims 1-6 and 10-13 are not anticipated by Mokerji.

Claims 1-6 and 10-13 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Gibbons (U.S. Patent No. 5,589,280). Gibbons does not disclose an article including a faucet surface or a door knob surface having a layer of polymer and a layer of refractory metal compound or refractory metal alloy compound. Gibbons discloses a reflector having a plastic film substrate 112, a thick metal layer 116 and an overcoat 118 of metal oxides, metal nitrides, metal sulfides or metal carbides. An adhesion promoting layer 114 adheres the metal layer 116 to the film substrate 112. Gibbons relates to the adhesion of the metal layer 116 to the plastic film substrate 112 to form a reflector. Gibbons does not disclose a faucet substrate or a door knob substrate as required by Applicant's claims. Claims 1-6 and 10-13 are not anticipated by Gibbons, and Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 7-8 and 14-15 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Mokerji in view of Foster (U.S. Patent No. 5,879,532). Foster discloses a process for applying a protective and decorative coating on an article. One layer 34 is comprised of the reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, oxygen and nitrogen. In column 8 line 66 to column 9 line 5 of Foster, it is disclosed that this layer 34 provides wear resistance and the desired color or appearance. The Examiner contends it would be obvious to provide a layer comprised of the reaction products of a refractory metal or refractory metal, oxygen and nitrogen in Mokerji, and Applicant's claims are obvious.

It would not be obvious to employ a layer of the reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal, oxygen and nitrogen in Mokerji. In column 4 line 66 to column 5 line 8 of

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Mokerji, it is disclosed that the top coat 22 provides protection to the underlying layer 21 and is transparent to allow the underlying layer 21 to be visible. A layer of the reaction products of reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, oxygen and nitrogen is not colorless nor transparent. Therefore, if a layer of the reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, oxygen and nitrogen was employed in Mokerji, a very thin layer would have to be used to allow the underlying layer 21 to be visible. However, if the top coat 22 is made very thin, it would be less effective in protecting the underlying layer 21 as required by Mokerji, ruining the disclosed benefit of the top coat 22. There is no suggestion to employing a layer of the reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, oxygen and nitrogen in Mokerji. It is not obvious to employ a layer of the reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, oxygen and nitrogen in Mokerji, and Applicant's claims are not obvious.

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Mokerji in view of Dewey (U.S. Patent No. 4,143,009). Claim 9 also stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Gibbons in view of Dewey. Dewey discloses a method of producing a polyurethane-epoxy resin. The Examiner contends it would be obvious to employ a epoxy-urethane resin because of Dewey on the polymeric layer 20 of Mokerji or the plastic film substrate 112 of Gibbons, and therefore Applicant's claim 9 is obvious.

There is no suggestion to employ a layer of epoxy urethane in either Mokerji or Gibbons. Mokerji discloses that the polymeric layer 20 can be polycarbonate, polyacrylate, polymethacrylate, nylon, polyester, polypropylene, polyepoxide, alkyd and styrene containing polymers. Mokerji only suggests these polymers and includes no suggestion of using a layer of epoxy urethane layer. Gibbons also does not disclose employing epoxy urethane as the film substrate 112. Applicant is not claiming the use of epoxy urethane, but is rather claiming a layer of epoxy urethane used in a unique article. Neither references discloses or suggests employing a layer of epoxy urethane, and there is no suggestion to employ a layer of epoxy urethane in either reference. Applicant's claims are not obvious.

Claims 1-8 and 10-15 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Gibbons in view of Foster. There is no suggestion to employing a layer of the reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, oxygen and nitrogen in Gibbons. Gibbons suggests a reflector including a thick metal layer 116 on a film substrate 112 and includes no suggestion of

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employing a layer of the reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, oxygen and nitrogen. Additionally, Applicant is claiming a faucet or door knob surface having a polymer layer and a color and protective layer. Gibbons discloses a reflective device having a metal layer 116 adhered to plastic substrate 112 by an adhesive layer 114. Gibbons does not disclose a faucet or door knob surface. The combination of Foster with Gibbons does not disclose or suggest a faucet or door knob surface having a polymer layer and a color and protective layer as required by Applicant's claims. Claims 1-8 and 10-15 are not obvious in view of the combination of Gibbons and Foster.

Claims 1-8 and 10-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Welty (U.S. Patent No. 6,132,889) in view of Simmons, Jr (U.S. Patent No. 6,154,311). Welty discloses a coated article including a substrate 12. A nickel layer 13 is applied on the substrate 12 and a layer 22 of a refractory metal or refractory metal alloy is disposed over the nickel layer 13. A layer 32 of refractory metal compound or refractory metal alloy compound is vapor deposited over layer 22. Finally, a layer 34 of the reaction products of refractory metal or refractory metal alloy, oxygen and nitrogen is deposited over the layer 32. Welty does not disclose a layer of polymer. Simmons discloses a photocatalytic dielectric combiner element 30 layered on a hard polymer 32. The Examiner contends because of Simmons that it would be obvious to employ a polymer layer in Welty.

There is no suggestion to replace the nickel layer of Welty with a polymer layer. Welty only discloses employing a nickel layer on the substrate 12, and does not disclose or suggest employing a polymer layer. Nothing in Welty suggests employing any other layer on the substrate 12 except for nickel. Applicant's claims are not obvious, and Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Additionally, providing a polymer layer as required by Applicant's claims provides many additional benefits and advantages. As disclosed in Applicant's specification on page 2, a drawback to the prior art is that the nickel layer must be electroplated when applied to the substrate. Welty also discloses in column 2, lines 29 to 33, that the nickel layer 13 is deposited on the surface of the substrate 12 by a plating process, such as electroplating. Electroplating a nickel layer requires electroplating equipment, which is expensive. The electroplating process is also laborious and time consuming. Employing a polymer layer as claimed by Applicant

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eliminates the problems of the prior art as electroplating is not necessary to provide a layer of polymer. Applicant's claims are not obvious.

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Welty over Simmons and further in view of Dewey. There is no suggestion to replace the nickel layer of Welty with a polymer layer nor is there any suggestion to employing epoxy urethane. Therefore, there is no suggestion to include a polymer layer of epoxy urethane in Welty. Claim 9 is further not obvious in view of the combination of Welty and Simmons and Dewey.

Thus, claims 1-19 are in condition for allowance. No additional fees are seen to be required. If any additional fees are due, however, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1482, in the name of Carlson, Gaskey & Olds, P.C., for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayment. Therefore, favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, TC 1700, Before Final, 703-872-9310 on August 18, 2003.



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